

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Department of Geography

GEOG 4210
Urban Geography
Dr. Murray Rice

Research Report: Expectations

The following is a basic summary of the elements I expect you to include in your group term project for this class.

- TITLE PAGE

The report should have an interesting title. “Research Report for Geog 4210” is not an interesting title, and it does not give any clue as to what the report might be about. Think about what might make someone want to read your report – what would make someone care about your topic? Try to include some key words in your title that would be important in defining what your project is all about.

- TABLE OF CONTENTS

Include all of your report’s major sections and their associated page numbers.

- ABSTRACT

The abstract should summarize the topic, research question, and major findings. It should not exceed 1 typed page (double spaced) in length (100-200 words).

- INTRODUCTION

The first page or two should acquaint the reader with the general area of inquiry. What is this area, and why should your reader be interested in it? Define your paper’s purpose in this section, including the retail firm or issue that forms your focus. Having a clear “research question” is important.¹ This section should be approximately 1-2 double-spaced pages in length.

- INFORMATION SOURCES

This section is a review of the key sources you found relating to your project topic. I expect you to do a thorough search of articles from the popular media and other data sources (people, government sources, etc.) you may have access to. Discuss any limitations or issues relating to the information sources you are using:

¹ See the separate “research question” handout for more on this.

what might be some biases associated with any of your sources (for example, if you use information from a tourist bureau, think of any ways in which such a source might downplay some issues while highlighting others). This section should be approximately 1-2 double-spaced pages in length.

- RESULTS

Outline what you found. Your emphasis here should be on presenting your results as clearly and interestingly as you can possibly manage. Take the time to do this well. This section should be approximately 4-8 double-spaced pages in length (not including any maps, tables, or charts you include).

- DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This section will discuss the meaning and significance of your results. Refer back specifically to your original objectives as well as to your findings, and discuss what your results mean for the city or situation you are studying. A good conclusion also provides some guidance as to future research or policy decisions that can and should be done related to your topic, given what you have found here. In other words, incorporate some recommendations for actions that you think would be a logical next step to take for a city government, university researcher or other organization, based on the things you found in your research. This section needs to be a strong point of your work. This section should be approximately 3-4 double-spaced pages in length.

- REFERENCE LIST

List at the end of your report the full bibliographic details (author names, book titles, publishers, etc.) for only those materials you used in the paper (not for sources you found but did not cite in your paper). List your references in a format consistent with a major geography journal (Annals of the AAG, Professional Geographer, Urban Geography, Economic Geography, etc.). Ensure that you have cited these references where you have used them in the actual body of the report. If you have any questions on this at all, please see me.

- OVERALL

The length of the total paper should be approximately 10-17 pages, double-spaced, not including your reference list. Any maps, tables, charts, etc. are also in addition to this page total. I recommend that you include some graphical material to accompany your report (maps, pictures, charts, etc.), because as we all know, “a picture is worth 1000 words”. Lastly, one very important thing I will be looking for is clear writing and organization. The better I understand what you’re doing, the better your grade will be.